

**OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO FORT  
PIERRE**

War Department  
Quartermaster General's Office,  
Washington, March 23, 1855.

Major D. H. Vinton,  
Quartermaster,  
St. Louis, Mo.

Major:

Obtain the most reliable information possible, as to the suitability of Fort Pierre Choteau, at the mouth of Bad River, on the upper Missouri, for a Depot of Supplies, and the nature of the country thence to Fort Laramie, together with the distance of the former to the latter place. Report to me on these subjects as soon as practicable. It seems to me that we would save a considerable 'sum annually, by sending our supplies for Fort Laramie to that point, and transporting them thence by land to Fort Laramie.

Since writing the above, I have received the enclosed instructions from the War Department, through the Adjutant General. You will consult General Clark, and will take prompt measures to carry out the views of the Secretary of War.

Furnish me the information called for in the first paragraph as soon as you can obtain it. From Mr. Choteau's partner, (I do not remember his name), you will be able to get satisfactory and full information ; also from others.

-Th. S. Jesup,  
Quartermaster General.

General

I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 23d inst., enclosing a copy of the instructions of the War Department, addressed to you by the Adjutant General, in relation to the contemplated movement of troops into the Indian country in the course of the ensuing season.

You desire me "to obtain the most reliable information possible as to the suitability of Fort Pierre on the upper Missouri for a depot of supplies and the nature of the country thence to Fort Laramie, together with the distance from the former to the latter place."

I have conversed with Mr. John B. Sarpy, the active or principal partner, at St. Louis, of the firm of P. Chouteau Jr. and Co., who are the owners of Fort Pierre, respecting the points referred to, and, from all the information I have gathered from him, I can come to no other conclusion than that Fort Pierre is unfitted for a depot of supplies for any considerable body of troops in its immediate vicinity. The dimensions of the enclosure forming the trading establishment, are sufficiently large to contain the ordinary qr. mr's stores, proper, the subsistence, ordnance and medical supplies, and to afford quarters to the officers and employees requisite at a depot; but, to provide for the wants of a mounted force, or the numerous animals necessary to be kept there for transportation purposes, there are none of the usual resources for forage to be found.

Fort Pierre is situated in the country called "Mauvaise Terre," and for hundreds of miles around, there is no grass susceptible of being made into hay for winter food. The short, but nutritious buffalo grass prevails and affords good grazing in the summer, but it is covered by the snows in the winter.

Fodder cannot be procured as a substitute, as the sterility of the soil forbids the cultivation of corn. Mr. Sarpy states that about the only district capable of producing corn, is found on an island about three miles long and three-fourths of a mile in width, and distant about three miles from the fort; but that the largest crop hitherto raised, has been about thirty bushels in one year, after repeated trials for five years; or, in other words, one meagre crop only can be expected from five plantings.

Fuel for consumption at the proposed depot, cannot be had at a less distance than twenty miles. The customary manner of procuring it in considerable quantities, is to send chopping parties above and raft it down the river to the place of deposit. Fort Pierre was established eighteen years ago, and, in the meantime, the timber, never very dense, has been exhausted within the circuit I have mentioned.

For our supplies of corn and hay then, we must look to the nearest settlements below on the Missouri, at present from 600 to 700 miles. I have had corn offered to me, to be delivered at such points at 60 cents per bushel, but to carry it to the depot, a boat of extreme light draft must be used, and, at rather favorable stages of the river. The navigableness of the Missouri from St. Louis to Fort Pierre, cannot be depended upon, for boats of 300 tons, longer than 75 days in the year; nor can more than one voyage be performed by a single boat. I am told that it is useless to leave St. Louis for such a purpose before the first of June, then to avail of the periodical high water caused by the melting of the snow in the mountains whence the Missouri has its source. It requires about 25 days to reach Fort Pierre, and about ten or fifteen to return to St. Louis. Hence you will perceive that to carry out the instructions of the War Department of the 23d instant, several boats will be required to convey all the stores necessary to supply the troops, cavalry as well as infantry, ordered there, and, should the Dept. become a permanent one, all the supplies destined for that quarter hereafter, must be accumulated at this place, so as to be shipped about the first of June of every year, to secure certain and economical transportation.

From the foregoing, you will be able, in a manner, to judge of the expediency suggested in your letter of sending our supplies for Fort Laramie to that point instead of to Fort Leavenworth. The annual supplies destined for Fort Laramie are now conveyed by contract with civilians; were they to be sent by the way of Fort Pierre, a train of wagons must be maintained there, at the risk and expense, and under difficulties to which I have adverted, to forward them to their destination. The cost of transportation per 100 lbs. from St. Louis to Fort Laramie last year, was \$8.31; the charge for freight to Fort Pierre, may be estimated at five dollars; and the subsequent expense of sup-

porting the animals belonging to the wagon train to forward the supplies, seasonably, is incalculable. From the character of the soil in that region, there can never be afforded means of transportation by contract, nor forage to subsist our own animals, through the facilities offered elsewhere by individual enterprise and a cultivated country.

The distance from Fort Pierre to St. Louis is 1525 miles, and to Fort Laramie, 325 miles. The road between the latter points is a good one in dry seasons, but very difficult after heavy rains.

I respectfully submit herewith a rough draft of the count-\within the circumference of the proposed operations, a plan of Fort Pierre, showing the dimensions of the several buildings, and a list of distances from St. Louis to various points on the i\lissouri, as far as its source.

Although I have expressed an unfavorable opinion of the capabilities of Fort Pierre as a depot (especially for cavalry supplies) it must be conceded there is no other place on the i\lissouri more eligible in view of the communications to be kept up with Fort Laramie. Should the depot or a military post be permanently established there, it may be found necessary to form an Entrepot at the "Eau-qui-court," or, between that and White River, and, for the purpose of malting the delivery of supplies certain, under the variation of the waters of the upper Missouri, one or more small draft boats should be purchased and kept constantly in service, plying between these points and Fort Leavenworth or the settlements.

Should you concur with me in the latter suggestion, I would respectfully ask that Major Ogden be detained long enough from the execution of his present orders, to purchase on the Ohio River the steamboats required and equip and man them at the same time.

I am, General,

With great respect,

Your obdt. servant,

-D. H. Vinton,

Major and Or. Mr.

Major General T. S. Jessup,

Qr. Mr. General,

U. S. Army,

Washington, D. C.

Headquarters Sioux Expedition,  
Saint Louis, Missouri,

April 5, 1855.

Colonel

I arrived at this city on the 1st instant, and have occupied myself since that time in the necessary preliminary inquiries and measures incident to the operations about to be undertaken, under my direction on the plains.

I find the Missouri River unusually low for the season of the year, so low indeed that boats of ordinary draft cannot ascend even to Fort Leavenworth. The two companies of the 6th Infantry which are to relieve those of the 2d at Fort Riley, are under orders and only waiting for an opportunity to proceed to Fort Leavenworth. In regard to the companies of the 2d Infantry destined for Fort Pierre, the experience of the oldest pilots on the Missouri, is opposed to their starting before they will be likely to meet what is termed the June rise; that is to say, about the middle of May, from Saint Louis so as to meet the June freshet about midway between this point and Fort Pierre. It is highly probable also, that the necessary supplies for the Quartermaster's and Subsistence Departments intended for that line, cannot be collected before the time above named.

In respect to the troops and supplies destined for Forts Laramie and Kearney, considering the prospect for an unusually backward spring, it would not be safe to predict their departure from Fort Leavenworth, before the 15th proximo, or the 1st of June.

As yet, Prevent Major O. F. Winship, A. A. G. and Captain S. Van Vliet, Asst. Qr. Mr., are the only staff officers that have reported to me. I doubt not that measures have been taken to supply the remainder required for the Expedition, but it is highly important that they should report to me at as early a day as practicable. I have already been advised that Captain (I. I.) L. Simpson, of the Subs. Department and a Topographical Engineer (not designated) are assigned to the expedition. There are still wanting at least one more Asst. Qr. Master, four more medical officers, one paymaster and an ordnance officer.

I have just received a letter from the Commissary General of Subsistence, relative to the assignment of Captain Simpson to the expedition, and a recommendation that he be required to

accompany the troops destined to establish a post on the upper Missouri. Such a destination is a proper one for an officer of his department, and it is my intention to give him that direction unless some unforeseen contingency prevent.

Regarding the Missouri side of the Sioux country as the most advantageous in many respects to operate from, it is my intention to move with the first troops leaving for that quarter, in order to satisfy myself, by personal observation, of the most suitable point for the principal depot; provided, Fort Pierre is not decided upon for that purpose, in which event it would be useless to look further at present. Indeed it is highly improbable that any other place can be found combining so many positive advantages for immediate operations.

It is barely possible that some other point might be found which would be preferable for a military post.

It may not be unseasonable to call the attention of the proper authorities to the expediency, and in my view, the necessity of purchasing a small light draft steamer for service on the Upper Missouri. The advantages of such a boat in operations along the river are too obvious to require explanation, not to speak of the many ways in which it could be made serviceable to the Depot.

I am, Colonel,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-Wm. S. Harney,

Bvt. Brig. Genl. &c.

Lieut. Col. L. Thomas,

Asst. Adjt. General,

Hd. Qrs. of the Army,

New York.

Adjutant General's Office,

Washington, April 25, 1855.

Bvt. Brig. Genl. Wm. S. Harney,

U. S. Army, Comdg. Sioux Exptn.,

St. Louis, Missouri.

General

The Secretary of War directs that you cause a military reservation to be laid off at Fort Pierre, of such extent as may in your opinion be required for public purposes, and to include the

island in the Missouri River three miles below the fort. Be pleased to forward a map of the reserve, for the information of the War Department.

I am, sir,

Very respectfully,

Your obdt. servant,

-S.Cooper,

Adjutant General.

Headquarters Sioux Expedition,

Saint Louis, Mo., June 2, 1855

Colonel:

I deem it proper that I should give a summary of the preliminary steps taken, with the view to carrying out the instructions I have received from the War Department in relation to the expedition placed under my command.

Two companies of the 5th Infantry under Bvt. Major S WWoods, are now in position at Fort Riley; and the two companies of the 2d Infantry under the command of Bvt. Lieut. Colonel W. R. Montgomery, are in waiting at Fort Leavenworth for the other four companies of the same regiment, which have been ordered to be in Alton, Ill., by the 10th proximo, to take passage for Fort Pierre. They will be received by boats, two of which have been purchased, and the remainder employed to transport them and all the public stores necessary for 1500 men a for one year. The two public boats are intended for the service of the Upper Missouri Post.

The three companies of the 6th Infantry, commanded by Major A. Cady and destined to reinforce the garrison of Fort Kearney, are presumed to be en route for that post, copies of the order for which movement, have already been furnished your office. The company of the 6th Infantry destined for Fort Laramie, and the recruits for the companies now occupying the same post, have been directed to escort the advance of the trains freighted 'with supplies for the troops on the North Platte.

I have sent Lieut. Balch, of the Ordnance, to inspect the prairie battery manned by Light Company G, 4th Artillery, and have instructed him to make all necessary repairs for putting it in condition for field service, if practicable. Should it prove irreparable, I propose to incorporate the company temporarily,

with the mounted force of my command, as I shall be in great want of that species of troops.

When the companies of the 2d Infantry and the public stores for the Upper Missouri shall have left this place, all that will remain needful to me in order to commence active operations, will be the mounted force assigned to the expedition. There are now four companies of the 2d Dragoons available. Should the six companies of the same regiment, lately ordered to Fort Riley, be placed under my command, I could enter the field with, probably, about 700 mounted troops; but as this force, even with the aid of such infantry troops as I could command would be small for the vast extent of country to be covered or order to operate with any prospect of a solid success, and as I am enjoined to undertake no "partial operations," I cannot too strongly urge the necessity of organizing the companies of "Cavalry" destined for the expedition with all convenient dispatch; especially if it be expected that I shall commence active hostilities this season. With the 2d Dragoons, the battery, and such infantry support as I should be enabled to take into the field, I should have no hesitation to encounter all the hostile Sioux combined, and should do so with the confident anticipation of a victory in the technical sense of the term; but a victory in our acceptance of the term, is no victory at all in the eyes of the Indians, unless we destroy more of them than they do of us. This is a fact well known to those at all experienced in Indian warfare. Savages must be crushed before they can be completely conquered. Measures must be taken to capture as well as to defeat the enemy, and to do that the mounted force originally assigned to the expedition added to the six companies of the 2d Dragoons before alluded to, would not be too great an allowance of cavalry.

According to the present appearances, the season will have been far spent before this mounted force can be collected and organized; so far indeed, that there is reason to believe that winter will have set in before it can penetrate far into the Sioux country. Had a portion of the time that was lost in Congress in passing the bill for an increased military force been spared to the expedition, it would doubtless have been ready to enter the field in season for a vigorous campaign; but that, in my judgment, is out of the question this year. A winter campaign near the base of the Rocky Mountains would doubtless be attended

with no little risk and suffering to the troops. Partial operations from convenient points, having in view the breaking tip of a particular band, might and probably would succeed, but anything like a general hostile operation during the winter season, between the latitudes of 42 and 45 and in a country elevated 4000 feet above the level of the sea, could scarcely be expected, and I presume is not. I venture these suggestions in no spirit of captiousness, for I have had the most satisfactory proofs, on all sides, of a willingness to aid me to the utmost extent that the means of the Government will allow. I make them merely to show that, under the most favorable circumstances, but little can reasonably be expected from the expedition this year.

I am, Colonel,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-Wm. S. Harney,

Bvt. Brig. Genl. &c.

Lieut. Col. L. Thomas,

Asst. Adjt. General,

Headquarters of the Army,

New York.

Headquarters 2d Infantry,

Fort Pierre, N. T., July 31, '55.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that Major Gaines, Pay Dept. and myself arrived at this post on the 14th instant. I assumed command of the post the day following.

In consequence of the low stage of water in the Missouri the public transports, destined for the post, have been compelled to discharge the public stores at various points along the river, and guards necessarily left to take charge of the same, consequently the arrival of the troops at this post has been protracted and in detachments.

Headquarters of "A" and "I" companies arrived at post on the 12th instant, having left detachments in charge of public stores.

Asst. Surgeon Magruder, Lieut. Warren, Top. Engr. Lieut. Hunter, 2d Inf., four privates of B Company 2d Inf., and 35 recruits intended for B and C Companies arrived on the 15th in-

stant. The Asst. Surgeon was detached on the 17th to visit the several detachments below and to rejoin Companies "B" and "C," in charge of public stores at Running Water. Twentyseven recruits intended for the named companies arrived on the 24th instant. On the 15th inst., Major Wessells with his Company was temporarily detached to Fort George to receive any public stores the transports might be compelled to discharge at that point, and if the buildings there should not be required for that purpose to take them down preparatory to their material being transported to this post, for the construction of public storehouses &c., here.

Other detachments are expected here to-night, "B" and "C" Companies to-morrow. Company "I )," Capt. Gardner's is still below guarding stores, for which the Steamer Genoa has returned and is shortly expected back, which will complete the arrival of the six companies of the 2d Infantry.

The return for the present month will be forwarded so soon as it can be prepared.

The nearest post office is at Council City, on the Missouri, 425 miles distant, at which, I believe, a daily mail arrives, via Chicago and Davenport. It is understood a post office has or will be shortly established at Sergeant's Bluff on the Missouri, Too miles nearer. An Express is now down and on its return the requisite information will have been obtained.

Very respectfully,

Your obdt. servant,

-W. R. Montgomery,

Maj. 2d Inf. Commanding Post.

Col. S. Cooper,

Adj. Gen. U. S. Army,

Washington City, D. C.

**Survey of Military Reservation at Fort Pierre**

Fort Pierre, August 7, 1855.

Major

Having completed the duties assigned me at this post, by your instructions of June 4, I shall set out tomorrow to return to Fort Leavenworth via Fort Kearney. My party consists of six experienced men of the country, mostly half-breed Sioux, and Mr. Carrey and myself. We are well supplied with everything

needful, and expect to be at Fort Kearney in from fifteen to twenty days. We shall travel as men of the country, and exercise the greatest vigilance.

The Brules, we are told by an Indian who arrived to-day, are in the Sand Hills, and are no worse to emigrants and traders than they were before the Grattan massacre. They are excited, however, against the soldiers, and would probably not lose an opportunity to destroy a small party, if it should be afforded them. These are the only Sioux we have any apprehension of.

There is a band of Ihanktonwans of the left bank of the Missouri some forty or fifty miles above L'Eau-qui-court, said to be desirous of making peace. The Ihanktonwannas are scattered along the left bank above Fort Pierre. The Unkpapas, Minikanyes, Sans Arc, and Blackfeet Sioux, are dispersed along the north fork of the Cheyenne and Powder Rivers, and on the head of the Upper Little Missouri.

I send herewith a sketch of a survey from Chantier River to Antelope River, a distance of thirty miles, made for the purpose of determining a suitable military reserve; and one also of a reconnaissance made from Chantier River to the Cheyenne, a distance by the road we took (a lodge trail) of forty miles.

The limit of the reserve, as established by the order of Colonel Montgomery, can be seen on the sketch. It embraces 310 1/2 square miles, about fourteen only of which are of any value. This great extent is required on account of the limited resources which the country seems to possess; these, however, are not yet fully known, and future experience may enable the War Department to reduce the reserve to much smaller dimensions. This year the country is presented to us in its most unfavorable aspect, because of the deficiency of the spring rains; and many places that generally furnish an abundance of hay, now have none.

Of the probability of success in cultivating the low prairies like the one on which the post is situated, I am not prepared to speak; they seem to be composed of the washings from the black clayey bluffs, and not a deposit from the river. At the site of the fort the grass has been killed by the Indian lodges, and all the cottonwood destroyed in giving the bark to their horses in winter; there is also a great deal of wild sage growing on this plain. It, in fact, seems to be the most barren of the low prairies I have visited. The landing here is very changing;

this season it is better than usual, but any high water may put a dry sand bar in front of the fort half a mile wide ; at present the steamboats discharge their freight nearly a mile from the depot. However, within the limits of the reserve, there is no place for a fort on the right bank of the river, superior to the one now occupied. As far as I have examined the river, the best places are on the left bank.

The islands that do not generally overflow (there are none wholly exempt from floods) are good for cultivation. The one included in the reserve is about two miles long by a half a mile wide, and contains a considerable prairie, yielding good grass for hay; it has also a good supply of timber (cottonwood) ; it is eight miles below the fort. The other valuable parts of the reserve are, the point on the left bank near the island just mentioned; a portion of the valley of the Little Missouri ; and the point on the left bank, about ten miles above the fort. These combined are thought by those most capable to judge, to be ample for furnishing the necessary quantity of wood, grass and arable land. The ravines in the bluff are excellent places for the cattle in winter, as they furnish shelter and food, and the earliest grass in spring. I have not completed my examination of the Little Missouri, and it is for that reason I have left it out on my sketch.

In making the reconnaissance to the mouth of the Cheyenne I was obliged to go by land, or wait indefinitely for the boat; I chose the former alternative, and visited all that was necessary to satisfy myself. I had the same party that goes with me to Fort Kearney, and they knew the country well. About four miles above Chantier River, is Galpin's Camp, with the party that vacated Fort Pierre on the arrival of the troops. This is a good site, has a considerable quantity of grass and wood, but not much timber fit for building; the landing is not good, better, however, than that of Fort Pierre, and it is in general a more eligible locality.

The next place worth speaking of is Du Bois' Point. This is a strip of bottom land about five miles long, and from a quarter to three-quarters of a mile wide; it has an abundance of the finest grass and timber, and a permanently good landing. This place and Crook's Point nearly opposite, would furnish all the supplies needed; there seems, however, no place to locate a fort

which would be too far from the river without subjecting it to being slightly flooded during extraordinary freshets; the bottom is also so flat as to probably remain wet long after a rain. The next desirable location is on what is called "The point below the Cheyenne"; this is a prairie from fifty to two hundred feet above the river, about five or six miles long, north and south, and a mile and a quarter wide; at the upper side there is a fine permanent landing, and there is said to be one at the lower side. There is a fine belt of wood at the lower end, and just at the upper end is a large island, probably equal in every respect, to the one included in the reserve. Altogether this point is a desirable one, and apparently offers, right on hand, nearly all the resources of this country. It is by water, forty-five or fifty miles above Fort Pierre. Formerly an Aricaree village existed here of more than three hundred lodges. I have been informed that the American Fur Company intend building upon it, but this is, as yet, doubtful. The general opinion is that the trade with the Sioux in this vicinity is ruined forever, and that it will not be profitable to incur the expense of establishing a trading post. The immediate vicinity of the mouth of the Cheyenne is not good for establishing a military post; the north side is the best and is good for trading. Dupuis is camped there with a party formerly at Fort George. I believe they intend to build houses, and occupying it permanently. Above the Cheyenne, there are said to be many good points for wood.

The Cheyenne is at present about one hundred and twenty feet wide, and eighteen inches deep at the mouth. There is said to be good cottonwood in limited quantities as far up as Cherry River, (60 miles) ; above that it has mainly been destroyed by the Indians to get bark. There is no pine on it until it enters the Black Hills; some cedar is found along the bluffs. The river is subject to very sudden rises, and falls equally fast; it is very crooked, and when high, has a very swift current ; Mackinac boats have been brought down in time of high water, but it does not promise much in the way of steam navigation. I have said nothing about the roads to and from different places spoken of. In this respect they are all about equal. With some labor on the first mile and a half on the bluffs, the road in dry weather would become good for loaded wagons, in almost any direction. Every point from Fort Pierre to the Cheyenne would connect

well with the Laramie or Moreau roads, or with the route to the black Hills, between the forks of the Cheyenne.

The Moreau road crosses the Cheyenne fifteen miles from its mouth ; there is another crossing three miles from its mouth.

The -sketches must be excused for the want of neatness as they were made with the least possible facilities.

In what I have so far accomplished, I have been essentially aided by Mr. Paul Carrey.

Whatever may be the comparative defects in the site of Fort Pierre .for a military post, it is evident that it is the only one in this part of the country that could be occupied this year as a depot, and the labor that will have been expended before another season comes around, may render the removal of the post an affair of doubtful expediency.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant.

-G. K. Warren,

Lieutenant Topographical Engineers.

Major O. F. Winship,

Assistant Adjutant General,

Of Sioux Expedition.

Quarter Master General's Office,

Washington, August 22, 1855.

Sir

Your letters addressed to Maj. Vinton and this office, dated from the 20th and 28th ult., are received, and your several reports as to condition of the buildings at Fort Pierre, noticed.

At the time the agreement was made for the purchase of the establishment, it was represented to the Department, by the proprietors that the buildings and everything appertaining to them, were in good condition, and it was on the supposition that this was correct, that the agreement was made.

It was, however, provided for in the written agreement that should the fort and buildings on the arrival of the agent appointed to receive them, be found out of repair, the said Choteau and Co. shall place them, all and singular, the buildings, pickets, mill, stables, &c. &c. in good repair, order and condition, free of all expense to the United States, &c.

It would appear from your reports that you found the buildings on your arrival and entering upon possession, all out of

repair, and none of them worth repairing. In this condition of affairs, you should have called on the party to have placed the establishment in the good condition provided for in the agreement, and if he was not prepared to make the necessary repairs, to have had an examination made of them and an estimate of the amount which it would cost (there) to have them made. If this had been done, some decision could have been made in regard to payment on the agreement by a deduction of the amount it would take to place the establishment in the order agreed upon. As it is nothing can be done until such a report and estimate are received. Should the establishment be in the dilapidated condition represented in your report, the Department will not be bound to keep possession under the agreement, if at all, certainly not at the price agreed upon.

You will therefore, with as little delay as practicable, make a thorough examination of each and all of the buildings, and everything appertaining to the establishment, and report fully and in detail the order and condition in which they were at the time you took possession of them, and an estimate of the sum required to put each in good repair, order and condition as provided for in the agreement.

You will send on your report and estimate after submitting it to the Commanding Officer for his examination and opinion thereon.

Should an agent of P. Choteau Jr. and Co., be at the post you will inform him of the receipt of these instructions, and allow him free access to your report and estimate that he may there and then have a full knowledge of the repairs you think should be made, and the cost of them. It is hoped that some understanding can be had between you and the agent of the Messrs. Choteau to enable the Department to settle the matter without further delay.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the agreement

I remain, sir,

Very respectfully,

Your obdt. servant,

-Chs. Thomas,

Dy. Qr. M. Genl. In charge.

Capt. P. T. Turnley,

A. Q. M., U. S. A.,

Fort Pierre, N. T.

Fort Pierre, N. T., Sept. 11th, 1835.

Dear General:

Extract.

\* \* \* \*

Had the reports which we received while in St. Louis in regard to the Farm Island and the immense amount of vegetables contained thereon, proved true, we should have but little use for the supply of anti-scorbutics we have most fortunately brought.

Instead of finding 500 acres under cultivation, covered with corn, potatoes, &c. &c., we find not to exceed five acres of cleared land, with but about three under cultivation, and that with only a small quantity of corn, potatoes and some few cucumbers. The growth of corn being of no account, I had it cut while green and stacked it up for the cattle this winter.

The potatoes were eaten up by the grass hoppers before I arrived, and the cucumbers were few and far between.

I have also been compelled to employ several herdsmen to attend to the cattle, as soldiers at a distance of ten miles (where I have the herd) without a commissioned officer, will not perform their duty. A commissioned officer could not well be spared.

\* \* \* \*

-Thomas Wright,  
1st Lt. 2d Inf., A. A. C. S.

Com. Gen. Sub.,

Washington, D. C.

St. Mary's, Sept. 22d, 1855.

Captain

Extract.

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The Quartermaster General has refused to confirm the purchase of Fort Pierre; this I think is the worst kind of taste, not to say want of good faith. That the post was not in thorough repair, it is true, but it could have been put so without rebuilding it. It has, however, subserved our purpose, and the protection it has afforded to our supplies, has well returned the price paid for it. I would by all means advocate the payment agreed upon. If all prove a bad bargain, it is no time now to use it meanly

and honorable principles require f should abide by our own acts and foot the bill without complaint, &c.

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Yours &c.,

-W. R. Montgomery,

Bvt. Lt. Col. U. S.

Capt. Turnley,

Asst. Qr. Mr. Ft. Pierre, N. T.

Headquarters Sioux Expedition,

Fort Pierre, N. T.,

October 19th, 1855.

Colonel

I have the honor to report for the information of the commander-in-chief that I arrived with my command in the vicinity of this post to-day, having made an extended march through the Indian Country. I left Fort Laramie on the 29th ultimo and striking across the head waters of the White Earth River, marched down that stream through the hostile Brule country for a distance of one hundred miles; then passing to the vicinity of the Cheyenne, I examined the country along the south bank of that river for about the same distance. I encountered no Indians; all the signs showing that they had gone towards the head waters of the Little Missouri and Powder Rivers, and my guides assuring me that it was impossible to penetrate that country at this late season of the year, without endangering the safety of the troops and animals, I determined to come to this post and make preparations for throwing my command into winter quarters. Four companies of Dragoons and ten of Infantry will winter here and there is much to be done to protect them from the rigors of the winter, as Fort Pierre is of much less extent and the buildings in a more dilapidated condition than I had -been led to expect.

I shall avail myself of the first opportunity to forward a more detailed report of my recent operations.

I would state that the health of my command is excellent.

I am,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-Wm. S. Harney,

Bvt. Brig. Gen. &c.

Colonel L. Thomas,

Assistant Adjutant General,

Head Quarters of the Army,

New York, N. Y.

Headquarters Sioux Expedition,

Fort Pierre, N. T.,

October 21, 1855.

Orders

No. 12.

A board of officers will convene at this post at 11 o'clock A. M. tomorrow, for an inspection in detail of the condition of the buildings, property, &c. at this place, and will report whether or not they are in accordance with the description made of them in the contract of sale, entered into between the U. S. and the Agent for Choteau Jr. and Co.

The board will consist of the following named officers,

viz:

Major M. S. Howe,

2d Dragoons.

A. Cady,

6th Infantry.

Bvt. Major H. W. Wessells,

Capt. 2d Infantry.

Asst. Surg. T. C. Madison,

Med. Department.

Capt. Van Vliet,

Asst. Qr. master.

Capt. P. T. Turnley,

“ “ “

The board will be furnished with all the papers necessary for the investigation and will be guided by the instructions of the Quarter Master General on this subject, addressed to Assistant Quartermaster at this post.

By order of Bvt. Brig. General Harney

-S. Woods,

Bvt. Maj. 6th Inf.

A. A. Genl.

Fort Pierre, October 22, 1855.

The inclemency of the weather, or some other cause pre-

vented all the members of the board coming together. The recorder therefore deferred business until ii A. M. October 23rd.

Fort Pierre, N. T., October 23d, 1855.

11 A. M.

The board met agreeably to the foregoing order, present all the members named in the order. The Recorder, Capt. Turnley, Asst. Or. Mast. then handed to the board a copy of the contract of purchase of Fort Pierre, herewith enclosed marked A, also a copy of instructions from the Qr. Mast. Genl.'s Office, dated August 22, 1855, directing Capt. Turnley Asst. Qr. Master to make examination and report concerning said Fort Pierre and buildings, herewith enclosed, marked B. The board then proceeded to examine minutely and inspect carefully, the post of Fort Pierre, the buildings, pickets, mill, &c. &c. appertaining thereto. The Board finds the buildings of the class and construction described in paper marked "C," herewith enclosed, reference being had to the rough plan accompanying the same.

The Board then adjourned to meet at II a. m. tomorrow.

Fort Pierre, N. T., Oct. 24th, 1855.

The Board met pursuant to adjournment, present all the members named in the order for convening the same.

The Board then proceeded with their examination and after a close and minute investigation of the condition, character, &c. &c. of all the buildings, pickets, mill, &c. &c. contained in the contract for purchase of Fort Pierre. The Board finds the buildings, pickets and mill in bad order, bad condition and bad repair that all of the buildings are in a dilapidated condition, that most of them are in such a state of decay and dilapidation as to involve the making new in order to place them in good order and condition required by the contract for purchase. At this stage of the Board's deliberation M. Charles E. Galpin, Agent of P. Choteau & Co. was introduced to the members of the Board, he having just arrived from his encampment seven miles above Fort Pierre. M. Galpin was informed of the object of the Board, and was asked whether or not condition of the buildings, pickets, k mill, etc. is now as they were on the 7th of July, 1855, when troops first arrived at the fort. M. Galpin replied that everything thing was in as good condition at present time as it was on that (late. M. Galpin then stated that he would withdraw and attend

to some private business. The Board continued its deliberation on the examinations made. The Board finds the North and Last sides of the pickets rotted off near the ground and falling down, requiring repairing by new pickets, also finds tice mill to be old, worn and of very little value. The Board does therefore after carefully examining the premises, with the best lights in their power, believe that the repairs requisite to place said post, buildings, pickets, mill, &c. &c. in the condition required by the contract of purchase and suitable for the purposes for which they were purchased, cannot be made at a less cost than Twenty-two thousand and twenty-two dollars. For specification of these items in detail the Board refers to paper marked "C," herewith enclosed. The Board adjourned to meet at 11 A. M. tomorrow.

Fort Pierre, N. T., October 25, 1855.

The Board met agreeably to adjournment, present all the members. The Recorder then read over the proceedings of the Board and there being no further business to transact, the Board adjourned sine die.

-A. Cady,  
Maj. 6th Infantry.

M. S. Howe,  
Maj. 2d Dragoons,  
Pres. Board.

H. W. Wessells,  
Bvt. Maj. 2d Inf.  
Stewart Van Vliet,  
Capt. A. Q. M.  
T. C. Madison,  
Asst. Surg. U. S. A.

P. T. Turnley,  
Capt. Asst. Qr. Mast.,  
Recorder of Board.

On the civilized side of the Mo.,  
Friday morning, Oct. 26, 1855.

Dear Captain

I have just crossed over after a two hours pull working at the oar myself all the time. My men worked all night & got the last load over just after sunrise this morning. Galpan's big boat ran aground the first trip and had to be unloaded by scows.

your men went to bed and mine did nearly all the work. Balsh, Down and my brother were up all night. This flat boat crossing of the Mo. is a d-d bad institution, but when you get here, particularly at this place, it appears that you are in a different clime. How the deuce any one in his sane mind can prefer the bleak r= plains of Fort Pierre, to the shelter of the woods, I cannot imagine. If I were the General, I would send every company away from the post with the exception of one or two. This place, from what I have seen of it, is an excellent place for a few companies, particularly if they had lodges. Making hots would destroy too much timber. My regards to Mrs. T.

Very truly,

V. V.

(Captain Van Vliet).

Capt. Turnley,

Capt. A. O. M.

Fort Pierre, N. T., Nov. I, 1855.

Sir

In reply to your letter of this elate, allow me to say that I have gone over the country on the west bank of the Missouri, for eight miles below and above Fort Pierre & although I have looked diligently for the three grand requisites which you mention, viz: Building timber, fuel and grass suitable for the sythe, found absolutely none worth the hauling.

The first time I saw at a distance the valley of the Little Missouri, I thought that an abundant supply could be had from it; but upon a nearer inspection, found the timber scattering and of a scrubby character, consisting mostly of a species of elm unsuited to any known domestic use. The little cotton wood upon its banks (there are no islands in it with timber upon them), is of recent growth and inaccessible to wagons by reason of the boggy character of the stream.

This year in my opinion, no hay could have been cut upon the Little Missouri or in its tributaries within the limits above mentioned.

On the other hand, if I have made statements, contrary or even regardless of facts, it remains to be proved. If I have hazarded opinions, I am responsible for them. If I have raised imag-

inary difficulties which a few days have dissipated, I have not yet seen the happy event.

When I speak officially of the destitution of a country, locality or vicinage, in supplies, &c., I do so with reference to the uses to be made of such supplies, and the consumption required. While I regret some of the phraseology used in my letters, yet I have nothing of the spirit and meaning of those letters to retract, nor one word less disparaging of Fort Pierre and vicinage, these remarks in justice to myself, and to vindicate truth, reports in resources and capabilities to offer. I am compelled to make to your office from "actual examination" to the contrary notwithstanding. I know not the authors of those reports to your office, which have been more reliable to the Department than mine were, nor do I care to inquire, especially as you do not say that such reports were official. I have heard of some reports having been made and published concerning Fort Pierre, the country, its resources, &c. &c., but I have not seen any of such reports. I am sorry the Department did not consider my statements of things here generally, as well as in detail at least deserving as much weight as others. I labored hard and long, and through many disadvantages to get here and to get property supplies here. I was disposed to view things as they were, not as many interested persons told me they "were once" or "would be another year." The post itself, I viewed in a practical, disinterested and impartial light. I was not unskilled in these things and used my best judgment to direct me, you received my views in letter of July 20th. Others differed from me, even officers here at the time, I think, however, that others of better judgment, have fully sustained my own convictions, which I tried to express in the language as briefly as I could. The same too in regard to the resources of the place and vicinity. I indulged in no hypotheses, but said what I saw, in the spirit and meaning of the practical results to flow from adopting my reports. The warm weather, and pleasant nights nor the fostering care and polite attentions of the people vacating the premises, did not lull me into forgetfulness, that 800 men were to be housed and warmed here; that as many animals had to be provided for, and that snows would take the place of beggarly tufts of grass. I knew the amount of supplies requisite. I knew too, what amount and the character thereof, could be gathered on the lands I had

seen. I had seen enough to warrant me in speaking as I did, and I am responsible for the statements, by fair representation. We have gathered no hay, the sedge grass and broom straw put up is only called by this name for want of a better. Taking the prairie hay as usually occurs on the southern prairies (I have no experience in the Northern prairies) at 100 per cent, then the material we have is about 30 per cent. You will see from my Quarterly Return of Property, that I take up 100 tons, which is the most I could possibly estimate it at, and even more, but the officer who cut it insisted upon 150 tons. It is going to issue out about 78 tons. I enclose my letter to your office dated 20th Aug. referring to the rate of progress of cutting hay and fuel as reported by these officers, compares badly with the results, but such was their opinion. When I came to count, & weigh and estimate myself, there appears this difference, for which I hope I am not entirely responsible. In conclusion, I have the honor respectfully to request, that, as official reports have to be laid before the Hon. Sec. of War, that this letter with the accompanying papers in number, (being as they are explanatory of official reports) be also laid before the Hon. Secretary.

I am Colonel, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-P. T. Turnley,

Capt. A. Q. M.

Col. Charles Thomas,

Actg. Qr. Mr. Genl.,

Washington, D. C.

Fort Pierre, Nov. 1, 1855.

Dear Sir

I have examined your report and estimate representing the condition and repairs you think should be made on the premises of Fort Pierre, to place the whole in the condition you think is called for by the terms of contract for purchase. The language therein is good repair and condition. Now what the representations were that the agent who negotiated the sale made to the department, as to the capacity or condition of the premises, I have not the means of knowing, further than that the company had represented it in good order for a trading post, such is and has been my understanding of this matter. But there has arrived here more than twice the amount of supplies and number

of troops requiring storage, that it was ever expected the Government would send here. I agree with you partially as to the condition of the fort, and must particularly that of the picketing, and the somewhat used saw mill, and also that of some of the buildings. But these latter, in my opinion, ought to be made equal to requirement of contract, in spirit and in meaning of the parties, and I firmly believe by much less repairs, and by far less expense than your report calls for. Certainly the Government did not mean to purchase a-new fort, while to repair the present structures of the old foundation, however long standing, comes fully within my construction of the contract. Now to do the latter repairing, in my opinion ought not to cost more than a few thousand dollars, say three thousand dollars, and not to exceed this amount one cent, this amount I mean to cover the entire expense of repairing the pickets, saw mill and buildings, and I regret much that I was not apprised of the repairs that would be required to fill the contract, and as for the buildings at the island, never were anything else than log huts of the roughest kind. But were certainly sold and purchased as they were. I am willing therefore as the agent of the company to settle with you by allowing a deduction of three thousand dollars from the amount of purchase called for in contract of 14th April. More than this, I cannot consent to with the present light before me, and my understanding in this matter. Should you be willing to do this, I shall feel myself bound for the company for the deduction proposed.

If not, then I prefer that the department at Washington settle the matter with the principal persons in the company on such terms as they may feel disposed to agree upon.

I am,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-C. E. Galpin.

To Capt. P. T. Turnley,

Asst. Qr. Master, F. P. N. T.

Headquarters Sioux Expedition,

Fort Pierre, N. T., Nov. 1, 1855.

Orders

No. ig.

It being deemed almost impossible to supply this post with wood for winter, without reducing the work animals, by labor,

to a condition that will render them unfit for service in the spring, the following distribution of the troops at this post will be made

1. Four companies 2d Infantry, under the command of Bvt. Maj. H. W. Wessells. 2d Infantry, will proceed to a point above, about five miles distant from this post on the east bank of the Missouri River, and there establish and occupy a winter cantonment.

Two companies of the 2d Infantry to be designated by Bvt. Maj. Wessells, battalion commander, will move to a point above. about eighteen miles distant from the post, on the west bank of the Missouri River, and report to Bvt. Maj. L. L. Graham, 2d Dragoons, now there, who will place them in a position for their winter cantonment.

2. Major C. Cady, 6th Infantry, with the four companies of the 6th Inf. under his command, will proceed to a point above, about ten miles from this post, on the east bank of the Missouri River, and select a place for the winter cantonment of his command, that he may deem most suitable.

Asst. Surgeon A. 'I Ridgely, i\1. 1). will accompany Major Cady's command.

3. Major M. S. Howe, 2d Dragoons, with one company of the 2d Dragoons, and a detachment of one non-commissioned officer and eight privates from each of the six companies of the 2d Infantry, under the command of an officer, will proceed to a point between the mouths of White and Leau-qui-court Rivers, from which lie can communicate with the public steamer "Grey Cloud." After said steamer has discharged her public stores, he will have them taken care of and placed at a suitable point he may choose for his camp, which will be selected with a reference to the establishment of a permanent military post. Major Howe will have the country surrounding the camp he may select, examined for fifteen or twenty miles, and a topographical sketch made of it.

Assistant Surgeon T. C. Madison, M. D. will accompany Major Howe's command.

By order of Brig. Genl. Harney:

Signed. -S. Woods,  
Bvt. Maj. 6th Inf. A. A. A. G.

General:

In obedience to instructions from your office, dated 22d August, last, I have the honor to report that I have thoroughly examined each and all of the buildings at this post and everything appertaining to the establishment. I find the buildings, the mill and fuel and half of the picketing, in what I consider a dilapidated condition, the whole requiring repairs (with the exception of the south and the west sides of the picketing) to place them in the condition and order required by the agreement. Paper marked "A," herewith inclosed,. contains a description of each structure, its condition, with estimate annexed thereto, of the cost to repair it. The condition of each here given, is the same which existed at the date I first came to Fort Pierre, and the same also as at the (late when the troops first arrived. My estimate for repairing the whole premises is twenty thousand five hundred and twenty dollars. The instructions from your office for me to make this examination, report and estimate, as also the result of the same, including my estimate in detail, have all been submitted to Mr. Charles F. Galpin, Esq., (Agent of P. Choteau Jr. & Co.) whose answer is inclosed herewith marked B.

The repairs required are so extensive (to meet what seems to me to be the requirements of the contract), as to involve the making new of most of the structures and half of the picketing. Nevertheless, as Mr. Galpin virtually says in his letter (B), there is room for an honest difference of opinion in this matter. Houses and tenements old and worn, of the usual construction, may be placed in good repair order and condition, in most cases, without the necessity of re-building or making new; but, the Fort Pierre premises are of that kind of structure when viewed in connection with their condition, as not to admit of this, yet, when the repairs called for by this report are made, the structures will be virtually new, and as good as new. Now as Mr. Galpin says, certainly the Govt. did not suppose it was purchasing a new post (or fort), to which I answer "If company designed to sell to the Govt. his Fort in "good order, repair" &c. then it was impossible to meet that design without the repairs called for. Hence, as I view the matter, there is, always a moral intent and spirit in the minds of contracting parties in matters

of this kind, which ought in justice, to govern a settlement, as well as the specifications of contract. Taking the condition of these premises, the language of the contract, and your letter of instructions, with my best judgment in the matter, I cannot, as an officer of the Government, agree to the deduction, merely, offered by Mr. Galpin, but must insist that the sum of twenty thousand five hundred and twenty dollars ought to be deducted from the amount of purchase named in the contract. I regret, therefore, my inability to arrive at any more definite understanding with the Agent here, although we have conferred freely on the subject, and in the most amiable spirit.

I am General,

Very respectfully,

Your obdt. servant,

-P. T. Turnley,

Capt. A. Q. M.

Major General Thos. S. Jesup,

Quarter Master General,

Washington, D. C.

The Missouri River has since the establishment of this post been very difficult to cross with scows, for three reasons, viz Low water, quicksands and high winds, which last frequently stopped navigation entirely for three days at a time. On the east bank of the river I know of no grass suitable for hay within the limits of four miles above or below the fort.

Very respectfully,

Your obdt. servant.

-J. T. Magruder,

Asst. Surgeon.

Capt. P. T. Turnley,

Asst. Quartermaster.

Fort Pierre, N. T., November 1, 1855.

Captain

I have just received your letter from this date, asking for a statement as to the resources of Fort Pierre and vicinity, to furnish the fuel and hay, requisite for troops and animals at this post. In reply I have to state that to my knowledge, hay cannot

be procured in this vicinity and fuel only in a very limited quantity, insufficient for the wants of so large a post; the right bank of the river (in reference to the latter article and vicinity of the station), having been apparently long since exhausted.

A tolerable supply of miserable grass can be cut on the left bank of the Missouri at different points ten or twelve miles below, and the same observation will apply to fuel, except as to quantity, but the river being almost impracticable, either for ascending or crossing, those supplies can only be available here, by the most extraordinary efforts and at great expense ; in fact it seems to involve the necessity of removing both troops and animals to the opposite side of the river.

It is said that a considerable quantity of wood and hay can be cut on the east bank, seven or eight miles above, but I have not visited that locality.

Respectfully, &c.,

-H. W. Wessells,

Bvt. Maj. 2d Infantry.

Capt. P. T. Turnley,

Asst. Or. Master, Fort Pierre, N. '1

Fort Pierre, N. T., Nov. 2, 1855.

Sir

In reply to your communication of the 1st inst., requesting "a statement in writing as to the resources of Fort Pierre and its vicinity, to furnish the fuel and hay required for troops and animals of this post," I have to state that I have been down the river on the west bank for sixty-five miles, and from actual observation find the country unproductive in either fuel or hay, so much so that nothing like a sufficiency of either could be procured for the use of this command.

On the east side, twelve or fifteen miles below the post, from one to two hundred tons miserable grass and a small quantity might be obtained at great expense and labor. From what I have seen and heard of Fort Pierre and the country in its vicinity, I consider it barren and destitute of the resources necessary for a military post.

The numerous sand bars in the river, and the frequent chan-

ges of the channel, render it extremely difficult for the navigation tion of flat boats.

Very respectfully,

-C. S. Lovell,

Capt. 2d Infantry.

Capt. P. T. Turnley,

Asst. Qr. Master,

Fort Pierre, N. T.

Camp Seclusion, near the mouth of the

Little Missouri River, N. T.,

November 2d, 1855.

Captain

Your note of this (late asking my opinion of the resources of the country in the vicinity of Fort Pierre, N. T., for subsistence of animals and fuel for the troops, I have this moment received. I have found but little grazing. Possibly fuel enough may be got for one company for the winter. In short from all I have seen, it is a most barren and destitute country of the requisites for the purpose you mentioned.

I am sir, very respectfully,

Your obdt. servant,

-M. S. Howe,

Maj. 2d Dragoons.

Capt. P. T. Turnley,

Asst. Qr. Master,

U. S. A.

Fort Pierre, N. T., Nov. 3d, 1855.

Sir:

In reply to your letter of ist Nov. 1855, I have to state that so far as I have had an opportunity to see and examine the country in the vicinity of Fort Pierre, I have found it a barren and desolate waste. I hardly think any language too strong to be used in speaking of it. There is no wood in any quantity that I have seen within twelve miles below the post; I have never been above the post on the river and cannot speak of that part of the country, but I understand that it is even worse than that below. The fact of our not being able to winter here is sufficient evidence that there is nothing to depend on at this fort, or we would not be sent off at this late season to but our

commands. I have seen no hay except on one point, 15 miles below, but I do not know what quantity it might furnish as I never examined it particularly. It looked to me like coarse grass and not likely to make good hay.

There are none of the essentials (except water) at this point necessary to sustain a military post.

I am,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-D. Davidson,

Capt. 2d Infantry.

Capt. P. T. Turnley,

Asst. Qr. Master,

U. S. A.

Fort Pierre, N. T., Nov. 5, 1855.

Captain P. T. Turnley,

A. Q. M.

Dear sir

A few days after my arrival here from Fort Leavenworth, in August last, I went in pursuance to your instructions to examine the Little Missouri River and ascertain whether a sufficiency of grass could be found to graze the animals "one hundred and fiftyseven in number," brought here under my charge. I did, carefully examine it for four miles or more above its mouth, also Willow Creek as well as the bottom between the two streams and do hereby certify on honor, that I could neither find a sufficient quantity of grass for grazing the animals above referred to, or enough fit for hay, to fill a cart bed. I also certify on honor that I have carefully examined the Missouri River bottom, as well as the bluffs, on this side for more than seven miles above the post and have never found an acre of ground that could turn off grass enough, even when closely mowed, to load a common two horse wagon. I have been more than sixty-five miles below this post "on the west side of the river" and hereby certify that there is not, nor has there been this summer, any good grass for grazing within sight of any of the roads that I traveled, certainly none that hay could be made of. I have been on the east side of the river, along the bottom, and on the table

land, for a distance of 12 or fifteen miles above, and certify that there is no grass four miles above this post that was fit for making hay this summer. About six or seven miles above is the grass Lieut. Curtis cut, and which I had hauled and stacked. It was a miserably coarse, sedgey, or rather broom grass, not suited at all for hay, but the best that could be got. Lieut. Curtis had cut all that could be cut (save perhaps two acres or thereabouts, in small patches of seventy or eighty feet in circumference), but had to mow it in small patches extending over a space of four miles long by one wide. The amount of hay (socalled) that I stacked up 'at this place is variously estimated. Some of it I hauled on government wagon beds and some on hay ladders. I am not acquainted with the weight of this kind of grass; but judging by the numbers of loads I should suppose there was over 100 tons. I further certify that there is no lumber on the Little Missouri River, three miles below this post, but there is some small brush wood and shrewberry; and I frankly state that to the best of my belief if it were possible to mow the whole of it close to the ground, not much over two hundred cords of wood could be gotten, if that. I certify further that four miles above Fort Pierre on the east side of the river there is no lumber, for I searched in vain to get a tongue for an ox wagon at that locality, and found only a few crooked ash bushes, say three or four inches at the most, in diameter at the stump. Two miles further up, however, on the same side, is the wood cut by Lieut. Curtis, consisting of low scrubby cotton wood, good for fuel, but nothing else. The same is the locality from whence fuel has been obtained for this post. It is first hauled / of a mile to the river bank, then put on the scow and brought over the river (the men often wading to pull the scow over the sand bars) and landed on the west hank at a point about six miles above the post, then hauled on wagons. The scow cannot be got near the post with more than 3 or 4 cords of wood on it.

Respectfully,

Your obdt. servant,

-D. W. Scott,

W. and Forage Master,

U. S. A.

P. T. Turnley,

Capt. A. Q. M.

Fort Pierre, Nov. 8, 1855.

Capt. P. T. Turnley,  
A. Qr. Mr.

Sir

In answer to your inquiries as to the resources, capacity &c., of the country at and in the vicinity of Fort Pierre, I have the honor to state that I am perfectly familiar with the entire country between Sargent's Bluffs and Fort Clark, on both sides of the river. I have frequently traveled over and explored the whole of it. I have been living in this country sixteen years and ten of the sixteen immediately at Fort Pierre, and am familiar with all the supplies that can be obtained at and in the vicinity, and I can truthfully state outside of business interests, that Fort Pierre is a barren and exhausted place. It has long been established and everything like timber and fuel has been long since consumed and for many miles, say from 20 to 25 miles on the west side.

In this I must except perhaps a few small thickets of underbrush, but none of it containing any material worthy of the appellation of timber and but little affording even fuel. It is not practicable to supply Fort Pierre with fuel except it be done either during high water, or else on the ice, and the fuel must come from some place on the east side of the river or from distant island. I have read your letter to the Quarter Master General dated July 10th, 1855, and also those addressed to Maj. Vinton of same date, and of July 24th and 28th. And I must here again freely state that I concur with you in all that you have said relative to the country surrounding Fort Pierre is most certainly a barren and exhausted and desolate waste and will not do or in other words furnish the supplies in timber, fuel and hay requisite for army purposes or even for anything else, while it is the most inconvenient locality to get supplies to from other posts, that you can well find on the river. What I have said in the foregoing are exactly my private views and convictions confidentially expressed to you and outside of all business transactions, and aside from my connection with the pecuniary interest of Messrs. Pierre Choteau J. and Co., as their Agent.

I am, sir,

Very respectfully,

Your most obdt. servant,

-C. E. Galpin.

Colonel

I have the honor to forward for the information of the War Department, a Report of a Board of Officers, who were ordered to examine and report upon the condition &c. of the buildings of Fort Pierre.

This report would have been transmitted much earlier, but was overlooked by Maj. Woods, recently acting' as my Assistant Adjutant General, who besides omitting to forward it, did not mention it to his successor.

The Report of the Board is fully approved, and in connection with this subject, I deem this, to be an appropriate occasion to submit some further remarks founded on my own observation.

At the time of my arrival here, there was no appearance of anything having been done except the putting up of some of the portable cottages, none of the kitchens were finished, many had just been commenced; the proper sinks had not been made; one, on each flank, had been established about 250 yards from the nearest building, and as they were in such a filthy state that the men could not approach them at night, the surface of the earth was covered with human excrement and very offensive.

Very little forage or wood had been provided for the winter and no proper arrangements had been made for procuring more of either. The wood and hay in this vicinity is either on the other side of the river or on the islands in the river; on this side, the nearest grass and wood is twenty-two miles off, where the 2d Dragoons Cantonment is stationed at present.

The river at this place instead of being an advantage, has been the greatest difficulty to overcome in obtaining these supplies. But one small boat, entirely inadequate to the wants of the post, had been built, and frequently it has been impossible to convey to the other side, the necessary orders for want of a boat. With this state of things in view Colonel Montgomery took with him to Fort Leavenworth, two public row boats, thereby interfering with, and generally retarding the crossing of the river.

I have never visited a post where so little had been done for the comfort, convenience and necessities of the troops, as at this

place, when the length of time and number of troops present are considered.

The troops of the 2d Infantry, (six companies) arrived here the latter part of July last, and were available for all purposes necessary to render the position comfortable for the winter, with the exception of a portion of five companies, for a period of eighteen days when they were in the field, in compliance with my orders.

The many disadvantages of this position, in addition to the dilapidated condition of the fort, should have determined the commanding officer of the troops to have moved on at once, either up or down the river, to some spot where wood and grass or hay could have been obtained, without the necessity of working both men and animals to such an extent as to be greatly injurious to the interests of the service. Five miles farther on the other side of the river, he would have found a position adapted to all his wants, and where he could have comfortably sheltered and housed the 2d and 6th Infantry for the winter, with the ample supply of portable cottages, and store-houses for all the stores which he had with him; this would have obviated the necessity which compelled me to place the 6th and the greater part of the 2d in cantonment on the opposite side of the river, at the point above indicated, to save the men and animals from being over worked.

In conclusion, I cannot but remark, it was unfortunate, that the steamers purchased to transport the troops here, were entirely too large for the purpose; it was unfortunate my orders were disobeyed in that purchase; it was unfortunate the troops did not arrive in this country earlier; it was unfortunate they were stopped here; and most unfortunate of all, was the absence of a commander of energy, experience and industry.

It is much to be regretted that General Hitchcock did not accompany his regiment to this place; his experience and intelligence were very much needed.

I am, Colonel,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-Wm. S. Harney,

Lieut. Col. L. Thomas,

Bvt. Brig. Genl.

Asst. Adjutant General,

Headquarters of the Army, New York.

Hd. Qrs. Fort Pierre, N. T.

January 8th, 1856.

Colonel

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication dated 9th of November last. In reference to the requisirements of Par. 962, Army Regulations, I beg leave to refer you to my letter of July 8th, 1855, (with Post Return) notifying the department of the occupation of this post. No permanent changes have taken place since that (late, except the arrival during July and August, of the companies of the 2d infantry, designated as the garrison of Fort Pierre, which changes have been duly noticed on the subsequent Post Returns.

The position of the post, being defined by maps, and known as a prominent trading post for many years, was, for these reasons, not described, it is however situated on the right bank of the Missouri River, in Lat. 44 23, 70 miles above the mouth of White Earth River by land, and 40 miles below the Cheyenne; by water, these distances are nearly doubled, it is situated about midway between Forts Ridgely & Laramie, the respective distances being about 320 miles, and in all these directions the roads are practicable for loaded wagons.

The nearest post office is at Sioux City, Iowa, at the mouth of the Big Sioux, and by land, 265 miles below this post, a post master has been appointed for Fort Pierre, but without funds or authority to make the necessary postal arrangements. The mail is therefore transported semi-monthly, by the Quarter Master's Dept., via the 2d Dragoon cantonment near Punca Creek, Nebraska, (and a few miles above the mouth of L'eau-qui-court River), to and from the post office before mentioned.

Very respectfully,

Your obdt. servant,

-H. W. Wessells,

Bvt. Maj. 2d Inf.,

Commanding.

Colonel S. Cooper, \_

Adjutant General, U. S. Army,

Washington City, D. C.

Note : Until Sioux City is better known as a post office, communications for Fort Pierre, should be addressed "via Council Bluffs, Iowa."

H. W. W.

Colonel

In my communication of the 11th inst. to Colonel Thomas, Asst. Adj't. Gen'l., Army Headquarters, I stated that before leaving this place I should report my observations as to its being an eligible position for troops, &c., but a want of postage stamps at my Headquarters and the inability of either the Qr. Master here or at Fort Pierre, to supply the deficiency, compels me to make the report direct to yourself. I have the honor to request colonel that you will cause this explanation to be made to the General-in-chief that he may not conceive this deviation from the regular course of correspondence to have resulted from any other motive than that of necessity.

I have not made an extensive reconnaissance of the country in this vicinity, at any distance from the river, having been satisfied from observations on the late march to this place that the advantageous points for a military position, are only to be found upon the Missouri River. Its tributaries, the L'eau-qui-court and Ponca Rivers, are deficient in timber for military purposes and cannot be navigated by steamers.

This part of the Missouri River is most plentifully supplied with timber; at this point there is more timber than at any other between this and Fort Pierre, comprising oak, cottonwood, elm, hackberry, and some ash, with a little cedar. There is also plenty of blue limestone. The point from which I write, is about twelve miles by land, above the mouth of the L'eau-quicourt River, twenty by water on the north or east side of the river.

The Ponca Indians have large fields of corn on the river between the Ponca and L'eau-qui-court Rivers.

Several suitable sites for a position have attracted my attention between this and L'eau-qui-court ; a selection from which depending upon the number and kind of force intended to occupy it. This can easily be done by the troops themselves if ordered to this point, by confining them in their choice to the south or west side, and the above mentioned portion of the river.

The military advantages of this position I need scarcely dwell on, they have been before reported, but taken in connec

tion with a second point on the Big Sioux River, to which my attention has lately been drawn, a cordon of posts can be established, which will supersede the necessity of Riley and Leavenworth as military positions.

The Big Sioux is represented as a fine country. for mounted troops, with plenty of timber and of easy egress to the country north and west of it. It is the favorite rendezvous in winter of the Poncas, Yanctons, and Santees, a band said to come from the Mississippi, who have annuities and supplies, and who divide their ammunition with the others when bent on mischief.

At least Soo of these Indians have lodges on the Big Sioux this winter, and their practice is to rob and maraud upon the settlers when about leaving in the spring. I shall check their operations this year by sending the squadron here to that point, by the steamboat, as soon as the river opens, which I ain told will occur early in March. Its presence will be sufficient, as the moral effect which the different operations of this expedition have produced upon every band of the Sioux with which they have come in contact, have far exceeded my most sanguine expectations.

Five Ponca chiefs came in to see me by my direction, a few (lays ago, and endeavored to explain the conduct of some of their people towards a settler and his wife near Omaha, sometime since, and other acts in that neighborhood. I informed them what they might expect in future by such acts, and directed them to bring in the parties accused, with the stolen property; this they promised to do, and upon their pleading the difficulties and hardships of traveling at this season of the year, I gave them seventy-five days grace in which to perform their task.

A force of four companies of dragoons with two of infantry, on the west side of the Big Sioux, which is Indian country, will command the actions of all the Indians on the Iowa frontier, they can feel the Mississippi Sioux, besides prevent them from crossing over to the Missouri, and will also flank and check the different bands of the Sioux on the north or east side of the Missouri.

To facilitate operations from the Big Sioux, I have already granted permission to Mr. Henry Goulet, of Sioux City, who came to me well. recommended, to establish ferries across the Big

Sioux and James Rivers, and bridge the Vermillion. This will ensure the communication to this point at all seasons

A force of two companies of dragoons and four of infantry will be sufficient at this point, to keep open the communication to Fort Pierre, protect the Nebraska frontier and open roads to Kearney and Laramie.

A practicable wagon route should by all means be sought for from this point to Laramie early in the spring; and in the event of the Department adopting this position, I shall give this subject my first attention.

Two companies of infantry at Fort Pierre will answer all the wants of the service; but a large force of four companies of dragoons and six of infantry, will be required to occupy a position in the neighborhood of the Moreau River, about 100 miles above Fort Pierre. It is represented as being most abundant in timber, and by taking the different bands of the Sioux which depredate upon the Oregon route in rear, will expose to them their own weakness. It is a convenient point to operate from in the winter, with infantry.

The Big Sioux position, I consider as indispensable. Should a choice be necessary between this point and the Moreau River, my preference is for the Moreau. It is superior in almost every respect, but particularly as a point of operation against the Indians in winter and summer.

Fears of another Florida war are frequently expressed by alarmists, in the public prints, but these are groundless, the conditions being essentially different.

In Florida the Indians commanded the positions best suited to their kind of warfare, and when driven from one position easily withdrew to another. In this country the troops select and command the few positions where the Indians can congregate, and from which they can act. Let these be occupied and the Indians must cease to disturb the country, or they will soon cease to exist.

The affair at Blue Water has sufficiently proven they cannot escape us.

The first necessity in the establishment of a position on the Missouri River, is a free and easy access to the islands and opposite shore, by means of good ferries, steam or otherwise;

but each ferry should be capable of crossing a company of dragoons in an hour.

Two small steamers, capable of freighting one hundred tons and no more, would be invaluable to the operations here. An engineer or two and a pilot to each would only be required, as the troops could easily man them and supply them with wood. They could run at all seasons except when the river is closed by ice; furnish forage, fuel, &c., and render certain the arrival of all supplies at the different posts. Two such boats this year would have more than paid for themselves in the economy of transportation.

I am colonel,

Very respectfully,

Your ob't. serv't.,

-Wm. S. Harney,

Bvt. Brig. Genl. &c.

Colonel S. Cooper,

Adjutant General, U. S. A.,

Washington City,

D. C.

Headquarters Sioux Expedition,

Fort Pierre, N. T., February 22, 1856.

Colonel

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a communication from the Honorable, the Secretary of War, dated War Department, Washington, December 26th, 1855, transmitting certain conditions to serve as a basis, upon which I am authorized to found a convention or treaty, for the restoration of friendly relations with such of the chiefs and headmen of the respective tribes of the Sioux, as may be duly empowered to act with me.

In answer, I have the pleasure to state that from present appearances, a large number of the Sioux are favorable to peace, and it was with great satisfaction that I found the conditions laid down for their guidance in future were just, considerate and magnanimous; such as will give these Indians confidence in the kindly intentions of our Government towards them.

From the information I have obtained from every source capable of imparting any, in relation to the affairs of these Indians I am most fully persuaded that mistrust, doubt and dis-

affection against our government has been designedly implanted in their minds, with a view of blinding them to their own interests, and that they might the more easily fall victims to the extortionate rapacity of traffic. When the benign and humane designs of our government are fully understood by these people, and made apparent by an undeviating course of honesty and firmness in every transaction between our people and theirs, they will listen to our advice and become good and respectable citizens. My most earnest efforts shall be exerted to affect this object, and I feel every confidence in the encouragement which I shall obtain.

To know everything satisfactorily a commander must see everything with his own eyes. Since my return to this post from the neighborhood of L'eau-qui-court River, having traveled up the Missouri River the entire distance, and observed and examined every position of any note, I am fully satisfied that this place is the best position for a depot of supplies on the river, to furnish the country back in the interior to the Black Hills, it is also the nearest practicable point of the Missouri to Fort Laramie.

A garrison of two companies will be amply sufficient to protect the stores and that would be the only duty to be done here; the haunts of the Indians being too far distant to render it expedient to move from this as a base.

A large force should be established at some point between Fort Clark and the mouth of the Yellowstone, as I consider the occupation of that portion of the country of the most importance in our exertions to control these Indians. Should this not have the desired effect, then another force must be established at Bear Lodge, at the Head Waters of the Little Missouri of the Mandans, where it makes its debut from the mountains. This is in the heart of their country, abounds in game and is their favorite retreat; such a temporary establishment as I propose at this point would enable us to overcome them in the winter and would force them to yield to any terms. But I do not think this last post will be necessary.

Six companies of dragoons and six of infantry at the Yellowstone will be sufficient; and in connection with this subject, I think it necessary to mention that the Arickarees, Mandans, and Gros Ventres on the Missouri River above Fort Clark, raise

yearly a large amount of corn, much of which is purchased by the traders at the contemptible price of a cup of sugar for each bushel.

Mr. Vaughan, Indian Agent at Fort Clarke, informs me that by my sending word to these Indians to raise this year seven or eight thousand bushels for the government they would do so, provided I would pay them in sugar, and molasses and coffee. I intend to make the request of them, and would most respectfully suggest that an amount of sugar, molasses, coffee and such other things as these people may require, be purchased and sent up to this country, to enable me to obtain from these Indians the forage. I am informed they do not wish money and will not receive it. Could not a part of the forage money appropriated for this command be expended for the above named articles?

This course would encourage the Indians to cultivate the soil, and by being more liberal than the traders in the price to be paid, we should soon gain their esteem at the same time, besides being great economy to the government in this item of expenditure. Half forage from the western frontier could be sent us this year and the balance we might risk getting from these Indians; I should not like to risk more the first year.

As tents cannot be used in this climate, the purchase of lodges will be another article of necessity to us, and a means of cultivating a friendly intercourse. This winter we have labored under great difficulties, our only means of obtaining lodges was through the traders, who charge exorbitantly for them, and who could not supply our wants, for what reason I cannot say. The skins dressed for the purpose can be bought very readily from the Indians, and will soon be made into lodges by the squaws for a little sugar. One hundred lodges of twelve skins each, will comfortably shelter from eight hundred to a thousand men during the winter, and they are easily transferred from one point to another. I shall be compelled to depend upon lodges for shelter next winter, for some portion of my command and should like very much to provide against such a contingency as the expense of them would be very trifling, if purchased in the way I propose.

When the Department receives the result of the council, to take place here on the 1st of March next, a report of which will

be immediately forwarded, it will then be fully possessed of the necessary information to decide upon the number and disposition of the troops which will be required, to enable me to carry out its views.

Would it not be well for you, colonel, should such a decision be made, to direct my staff officers in St. Louis to procure and forward the necessary supplies for the number of troops required, to the points selected? This will save much time. Any post above this should be occupied by at least 12 companies.

These Indians will no doubt comply with all my requirements as long as there is a sufficient number of troops in the country to chastise them when they misbehave.

In conclusion, I deem it my duty to make honorable mention of Mr. Alfred J. Vaughan, Indian Agent for the Upper Missouri River tribes. The station of this gentleman has been at Fort Clarke for some time past, in the midst of our enemies the Sioux; with a large amount of government goods &c., under his charge, and without any force to protect them or himself. In this perilous position he has shown the greatest firmness ' and decision of character, and remained at his post when few other men would have done so. His conduct and advice to these Indians has always been consistent, tending to carry out the views of the government and at the same time promote the welfare of the Indians. He is well versed in the policy to be observed towards them and is I know sincere in his efforts to carry it out. The difficulties with the Indians would correspondingly diminish, by a proportionate increase in the number of such agents.

I am Colonel,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-Wm. S. Harney,

.Bvt. Brig. Genl. &c.

Colonel S. Cooper,

Adjutant General,

U. S. Army,

Washington, D. C.

Headquarters Sioux Expedition,

Fort Pierre, N. T., March 9, 1856.

Colonel

I have the honor to state that at the time of writing my

communication to you of the *zed ultimo*, representing this place as the best position on the river for a depot from which to supply the country in rear of this towards the Black Hills, &c. I was ignorant of an insuperable objection to this as a military position, viz: That freight cannot be landed from steamers within five miles of this Fort above, on this side or three miles below. This would require an immense amount of transportation for the depot alone, and has decided me to move this command to the site of old Fort Lookout, where the landing is good, the situation fine, with all the accessories for building a post that are generally to be found, such as plenty of timber, fine bottoms for grass and hay, &c. This position is below the Big Bend of the Missouri, about twelve miles on the south or west side, it is farther from Laramie than this point, but a good road can readily be made both from Lookout and the mouth of Ponca or (L'eau-qui-court) to Laramie, so I am most credibly informed by Campbell and Rencontre, both my interpreters in the late council and in both I place every reliance in such matters. This statement is further supported by "The man that is struck by the Ree" the principal chief of the Yanctons. The road from the mouth of Ponca to Laramie would strike my trail from Laramie here, where it crosses the L'eau-qui-court. The Big Bend of the Missouri is thirty miles round and only four across, by fencing some two or three miles of this distance across, we should have an admirable enclosure for all our stock; a range of thirty miles, with plenty of fine grass, both prairie and bottom. Unless directed to the contrary, I shall move as soon as I can obtain the use of a steamer here, to transport the stores. I have ordered the quartermaster to take down the cottages, and he has already commenced.

In conversation with many of the chiefs of the Sioux who attended the late council, with others thoroughly acquainted with the country, I have arrived at the conclusion that a point opposite the mouth of Apple Creek, three miles below Heart River and sixty below Fort Clarke, is the proper position above this, to be selected; it contains all the facilities for establishing a post; an abundance of timber, grass, &c., and is in the midst of the various bands of Sioux, Uncpapas Blackfeet, Sioux, Minniconjos, Yanctonnais, besides the Mandans, Arickarees and Gros Ventres, of that region of country. Their favorite retreat the

Little Missouri of the Mandans, is easily reached from this point.

On the arrival of the steamers I shall send some infantry tip there, that they may commence at once the necessary preparations for a permanent position.

I shall accompany this command if I can find that the time will permit it before commencing the summer campaign.

I enclose for the information of the Department, a list of prices which are paid by the traders to the Indians in goods, for their robes. It clearly shows how grossly the latter have always been imposed upon.

I am, Colonel,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-Win. S. Harney,

Bvt. Brig. Genl. &c.

Colonel S. Cooper,

Adjutant General,

U. S. Army,

Washington, D. C. .

Headquarters Sioux Expedition,

Fort Pierre, N. T., March 12, 1856.

Colonel

I have the honor to submit for the consideration of the General-in-chief, a report of certain facts and conditions of the military service of this portion of our frontier, of such importance and necessity as to require a material modification of the present disposition of the troops in regard to unity of will and action, to enable them to obtain the most effective results.

The Sioux nation embraces many bands not at present under my authority; residing in the immense region of country from the Rocky Mountains to the Upper Mississippi River. These Indians pass into this portion of the country to commit depredations on the whites, trespass on the bands of their own nation living here, and then return to their homes.

These homes are much nearer to the military stations of the St. Peters and Mississippi Rivers than any station of my command that I can place. I need scarcely say to the General-in-chief that the sending of troops some four or five hundred miles after Indians, when a sufficient force already exists within one

hundred and fifty miles of them and sometimes a less distance, would be a display of military energy unsupported by either economy discretion or proper judgment. Neither can it be expected that the troops stationed at the St. Peters and Mississippi Rivers, are cognizant of the acts committed in this portion of the country by the Indians who live near them ; there being no military connection or communication between us.

There is no enemy who so readily embraces the advantage of a defect in the policy or system of his foe as the Indian ; until every crevice is closed he is always reluctant to yield, but once convinced there is no escape, he gracefully submits to his fate.

In view of these facts, and that the entire Sioux should be treated as one nation, I would most respectfully suggest that the force placed for their control should be of a single command, whose geographical limits to be adequate to the services required, should be somewhat as follows: Bounded on the north by the British Possessions, on the east by the Mississippi River, to some point where the jurisdiction of the States begins; thence across to the head waters of the Big Sioux River, down that river to its mouth; thence down the Missouri to the mouth of the Platte, the southern boundary to be determined by the Department, bounded on the west by the Rocky Mountains. These bounds are taken from a copy of a map prepared by the Corps of Topographical Engineers of date 1850.

The headquarters of this command should be established at some point best adapted for communication with the government and easily accessible from all points of the section of country above designated. This may be at the new position I have selected 12 miles below the Big Bend of the Missouri, or such other point as the interests of the service and the requirements of the government may demand.

The Metis or half breeds of the Red River of the North, have been in a state of war with some bands of the Sioux for a long time past. The Blackfeet and Uncapapa bands of Sioux made an excursion to the Red River settlement last summer, and took from them 300 horses, besides some forty cattle. It is probable the half breeds will attempt this season to retaliate, and so induce the Sioux to further outrages. This should be stopped by all means, but my authority does not extend to these half-breeds, besides many of them are British subjects and require special

June 30th, 18.56,

Colonel:

I have the honor to report that in consequence of the advanced state of the season and the arrival of the supplies for the troops on this river during the coming year, I have decided upon placing a permanent position at a point on the west side of the Missouri River, 30 miles by land above the mouth of the L'eauqui-court River. I have caused the stores to be landed there and shall direct the movement of the troops from Fort Pierre as soon as it can be done, with the exception of two companies, which it will be necessary to retain at that place for the present, to guard the stores, &c.

I have no intention of occupying a position near Old Fort Lookout, as I understand a position for a depot is not required for Fort Laramie on this part of the river, but I shall hold a portion of the troops in readiness to be sent, should the Department so decide, to the vicinity of Long Lake, the most important point to be occupied on the river, in my opinion.

Should the Secretary accord with me in the position I have selected, I desire to suggest the name of Fort Randall as its designation-it being a token of respect to the memory of a deceased officer of our army-the highly esteemed Colonel Daniel Randall, late Deputy Paymaster General.

The temporary position of the Squadron of the 2nd Dragoons at this place I shall retain until further orders from your office.

These dispositions contemplate but two permanent Posts, the one near L'eau-qui-court, the other in the vicinity of Long Lake, and I have the honor to request the detailed instructions of the Department, on this subject at an early day.

I am Colonel,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

-Wm. S. Harney,

Bvt. Brig. GenL &c.

Colonel S. Cooper,

Adjutant General,

U. S. Army,

Washington, D. C.

July 18th, 1857.

You are hereby authorized to take charge of all buildings and other public property left at Fort Lookout, N. T. and of land extending (six) miles above and below that point by the river running back from each bank to the Bluffs, constituting the military reservation of that post.

Your obdt. servant,

Capt. & A. Q. M.

Fort Randall, N. T.

July 18th, 1857.

I have the honor to inform you that the following is a correct copy of the remarks made on the neap of Licut. Warren of the reservation at Fort Pierre referred to in my communication of yesterday.

viz.

### Preliminary Sketch.

Of a Survey of the Missouri River, Ft. Pierre for the purpose of laying out a reserve for that Post, made under orders from Brig. Genl. AV. S. Harney, by Lieut. G. K. Warren, Top. Eng. U. S. Army aided by Paul Carrey Esq., Augt. 1855. Scale 2 inches to the mile.

0                      1                      2                      3

Note:-The Survey was made with a Chain & Schinalader Compass.

The positions of the corners of the reserve near Chantier & Antelope rivers are only approximate.

This Reserve as established by the order of Bvt. Lieut. Col. W. R. Montgomery, Major 2d Infantry is limited on the North by the parallel of latitude having a point i mile west of the month of the Chantier river, and on the west by the Meridian through the same point on the South by the parallel of latitude through a point i mile south of the mouth of Antelope river, and on the East by the Meridian through the same point.

It extends by the river 16 miles above the Fort and 12 miles below total extent along the river 28.

Its length (East & West) 22; miles, and its breadth (north & south) 12/ miles, Area 271/ square miles; It contains about 12 square miles of useful land, about one of which contains good building timber.

-G. K. Warren,

Lt. Top. Eng.

Very respectfully,

Your obdt. servant,

-Geo. H. Paige,

Capt. & A. Q. M.

Fort Randall, N. T.

July 17th, 1857.

Gentlemen

The limits of the reserve at Fort Pierre over which you have control as agent on the part of the Government including that reservation of lands which were made by Lieut. Warren by order of General Harney.

You will please take charge of all Government Property which you may find on that reservation or its vicinity.

Very respectfully,

Your obdt. servant,

-Geo. H. Paige,

Capt. & A. Q. M.

Messrs. D. M. Frost & Co.

Fort Pierre.

### **Record Events : Fort Pierre, Nebraska Territory.**

July 7, 1855. Headquarters and Company G, 2nd Infantry arrived by steamer Arabia log officers and men. July 12th, Company A arrived by steamer Grey Cloud-82 men, and Company I, by steamer William Baird 84 men-all under command of Captain Henry W. Wessells, 2nd Infantry; July 14th Major William R. Montgomery, 2nd Infantry, joined and assumed command.

July 31, 1855. Officers at Fort Pierre.

Major W. R. Montgomery, 2nd Infantry, Commanding. "

A. W. Gaines, Paymaster.

Assistant Surgeon, T. C. Madison.

Captain P. T. Turnley, Quartermaster.

" M. D. L. Simpson, Commissary of Subsistence.

" D. Davidson, 2nd Infantry, Commanding Com  
pany I.

1st Lieut. N. H. McLean, 2nd Infantry, Adjutant.

" T. W. Sweeney, 2nd Infantry.

" James Curtis, 2nd

"2nd G. K. Warren, Topographical Engineer.

" R. F. Hunter, 2nd Infantry.

August 2, 1855. Company B, 2nd Infantry-1 officer, Captain Nathaniel Lyon, and  
37 men, and Company C, 35 men, joined by steamer Clara.  
August 19th, Company D, 2 officers, Captain Wm. M. Gardner,  
2nd Lieut. J. D. O'Connell and 80 men, joined by steamer  
Genoa.

September 16, 1855. Captain C. S. Lovell, 2nd Infantry, arrived and assumed  
command, relieving Major Montgomery, ordered to Fort Leavenworth.

October 31, 1855. General W. S. Harney and staff arrived Octo  
ber 19th and Fort Pierre becomes Headquarters of the Sioux Expedition,  
which included the following troops Camp 2nd Dragoons, Troops D and  
H 141 Off. & men.

" E and K 111

" Ft. Pierre, Cos. A, B, C, D, G and I, 2nd Infy. 410 "

Camp 6th Infantry, Cos. A, E, H and K 235

Aggregate 897. "

November 6, 1855. Companies B, D and I, 2nd Infantry-3 officers and 205 men  
left Post and encamped at a point on the east bank of the  
Missouri, 7/ miles above Fort Pierre, under command of  
Captain Gardner, to which is given the name Cantonment  
Miller. Company C, encamped at Farm Island, Missouri River,  
below the Post same date, Captain Wessells in command of  
Fort Pierre.

May 25, 1856. Colonel Francis Lee, 2nd Infantry, arrived and assumed command,  
strength of garrison May 31st, 19 officers and 447 men.

July 28, 1856. Companies C and I left for Fort Randall, and Headquarters and  
Companies B and D, left for Fort Lookout, leaving Companies  
A and G and detachments, 6 offi-

cers and 169 men, under command of 1st Lieutenant J. D.

O'Connell, R. O. 11.

August 3, 1856. Captain C. S. Lovell, 2nd Infantry, arrived and assumed command.

.September 26, 1856. Company F, Captain Alfred Sully and 2nd Lieut. R. F. Hunter, with 39 men joined and Company G, 75 men left for Fort Randall. Garrison now consists of Companies A and F, 2nd Infantry, 6 officers and 110 men under command of Captain Lovell.

May 16, 1857. Troops left for Fort Randall on board steamer D. H. Morton and post abandoned in accordance with General Orders I, Headquarters of the Army, March 2, 1857.

Asst. Or. Master's office, Fort Pierre, N. T.,

November, 1855.

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 29th August last, referring to my letter to your office dated 20 July previous, and also to my letters to Maj. Vinton, dated 20, 24 and 28 July and 2d August, copies of which had been placed before you.

No person can regret so much as I do, that I should have been the means of placing the Department in doubt as to what it could depend upon for the support of the troops and animals which it had contemplated to have wintered at, Fort Pierre. To do the very opposite of this, and to give the most correct and timely information, has been my honest and unceasing effort. That my letters are contradictory on the subject referred to, in the proper and fair sense of the term, I cannot admit. That a variety of views, hopes, fears and expectations, as well as suggestions, were advanced by me, is not only apparent, but absolutely true; and I hope I am not mistaken in saying that such was quite natural under the circumstances. I thank you sincerely for the caution you give me for the future, in making official reports. If your caution refers to contradictory statements or to a deviation from facts, I deny the imputation. If it refers to a pertness in the style of my letters, I acknowledge the fault; it is an error I often fall into when trying to save the patience and time of my readers; when I desire to save them

from the unpleasant task of wading through a rigmarole of descriptions "may be so's" and "probabilities" to arrive at but little in the end. I shall not cease to try to correct this fault, it leads to common place expressions and language, such as I am sorry ito have placed in official letters. I have used in those letters language unnecessarily pert, to be brief and yet forcible; I ought not to have done it, would not have done so, had I presumed those letters would have gone further than their address (or even copies of them). Nevertheless I must beg leave, most respectfully, to disagree with you, as to the non-necessity of calling my attention to particulars, I deem it altogether necessary to my own peace of mind, if for nothing else, that any attention be directed particularly, to the statement which you have found thus contradictory in my letters.

### **Fort Lookout**

In the spring of 1825 Brigadier General Henry Atkinson, United States Army, and Major Benjamin O'Fallon, Indian Agent, were appointed Commissioners to hold treaties of trade and friendship with the Indian tribes beyond the Mississippi. They left Fort Atkinson at Council Bluffs on the 16th of May, 1825, with an escort of 476 men, ascended the Missouri, and on the 17th of June arrived at "Fort Lookout, a position occupied by the American Fur Company, twenty miles below the Grand Bend on the right bank of the river" and on the 22d concluded a treaty with the Tetons, Yanctons and Yantonies.

See Report of the Commissioners to the Secretary of War dated St. Louis, November 7, 1825, in State Papers Indian Affairs, vol. 2, p. 605.

### **Record of Events Fort Lookout, Nebraska Territory.**

June 3, 1856. Companies D and H, 2nd Dragoons arrived from old Cedar Fort.

Captain L. P. Graham, 1st Lieutenant S. H. Starr, Company D. 2nd Lieutenant J. B. Villepique Company H. They left August 3, 1856 for Fort Randall. No Returns; ,Nothing in Letter Receive Books.

July 31, 1856. Headquarters and Companies C and I, 2nd Infantry arrived from Fort Pierre en route to Fort Randall under command of Captain H. H. Davis, 2nd Infantry 161 officers and men. Companies B and D, 2nd Infantry ar-

rived from Cantonment Miller same date under command of Captain W. M. Gardner, 211d Infantry, 117 officers and men.

August 31, 1856. Companies C and I, left on the 2nd. Captain N. Lyon, 2nd Infantry joined on the 3rd and assumed command. Present 31st, Captain Lyon, Captain W. M. Gardner, 1st Lieutenant Geo. H. Paige Company D and Assistant Surgeon D. L. Magruder 4 officers and 157 men.

October 31, 1856. Companies E, G, H and K, 2nd Infantry arrived 'October 2nd at 2.40 P. M. Companies H and K remained at Post. Companies E and G resumed the march to Fort Randall October 3rd. Lieutenant Colonel Abercrombie arrived 3rd and assumed command, but left on the 6th turning over command to Captain G. W. Patten. 2d Lieutenants W. C. Spencer Company K, and W. Lee Company H commanding Companies. Strength 31st 5 officers and 245 men. Garrison B, D, H and K, 2d Infantry.

June 17, 1857. Entire garrison left for Fort Randall, abandoning Post, (as per Regimental Return.) No Post Return later than May 31st.

Headquarters Sioux Expedition,

Camp near Mouth of Big Sioux River,

July 10th, 1856.

#### Orders

##### No. 16.

1.... In compliance with instructions from the War Department, the following disposition of Troops on the Upper Missouri River will be carried into effect without delay (Viz:)

1st. The two squadrons of the 2nd Dragoons ("D", "E", "H" & "K" Companies) at the position called Fort Randall, about thirty miles by land above the mouth of L'eau-qui-court River, on the West side of the Missouri.

2nd... The 2nd Infantry to be distributed as follows: The Head Quarters of the Regiment, and four Companies at Fort Randall. Four Companies to establish a Post at Fort Lookout. Two Companies to garrison Fort Pierre.

II.... The Companies of the 2nd Infantry will be assigned to the Stations above indicated by the Colonel, who will give

such instructions and Orders as shall be necessary to place them in position.

The Lieut. Colonel of the 2nd Infantry will take Post at Fort Lookout, the Senior Major at Fort Pierre, and the Junior Major at Fort Randall.

The squadron of Dragoons now at Fort Lookout will be relieved at once by two Companies of the 2nd Infantry, and proceed by land to Fort Randall.

III .... Assistant Surgeon H. Madison is assigned to duty at Fort Randall- Assistant Surgeon D. L. Magruder to Fort Lookout and Assistant Surgeon N. S. Crowell to Fort Pierre.

By Order of Bvt. Brig. General Harney.

(Signed) -A. Pleasanton,

Captain 2nd Dragoons,

Assistant Adjutant General.

Head Quarters, 2nd Infantry,

Fort Pierre, N. T., July 10th, 1856.

Orders

No. 43.

In compliance with Orders No. 16 dated Head Quarters Sioux Expedition July 10th 1856, the Second Infantry is assigned to Station as follows: viz  
Fort Randall.

The Head Quarters of the Regiment

Colonel F. Lee,

Major S. Burbank,

1st Lieut. N. H. McLean, Adjutant.

2nd Lieut. J. D. O'Connell, R. Q. M.

The Non-Commissioned Staff, Band and Companies "C",

"E", "G" & "I".

Fort Lookout.

Lieut. Colonel I. I. Abercrombie,

Companies "B", "D", "H" & "K".

Fort Pierre.

Major H. Day,

Companies "A" & "F".

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Captain W. M. Gardner with Companies "B" & "D" will

souri a distance of 80 or 90 miles.-A little later in the season, and I doubt if we could have reached the Missouri without losing a large portion of our cattle as most of the water holes would in all probability have been entirely dry. As it was, owing to the distance we had sometimes to travel without water the animals suffered a good deal. Horse or mule teams with light wagons I should think might cross at any time of the year, as the road is naturally one of the best I ever passed over. As an evidence of this the only accidents that occurred during the whole march was the loss of three oxen, the breaking of two tongues and the upsetting-through bad management-of one wagon.

The viometer makes the distance 310 miles, making deduction for slight deviations, I may be justified in putting it down at 300. I shall as soon as it can be completed by Capt. Sully forward a sketch of our route with the distance travelled every day, water courses intervening and such other features of this dreary region of country as may be of use hereafter.

On the 29th ultimo I resumed my march for Fort Lookout with Companies "E" "G" "A" and "K" leaving Compy. "F" at Fort Pierre in place of Compy. "G" by Colonel Lee's order of the 10th July and arrived at this post this day. Companies "E" & "G" leave on the 5th inst. for Fort Randall to which post they have been assigned by Colonel Lee.

Very respectfully,

Your obt. Servant,

-J. J. Abercrombie,

Lt. Col. 2d Inf. Commanding.

Col. S. Cooper,

Adjt. General U. S. A.

Washington, D. C.

### **Old Fort George**

On the Military map of Nebraska and Dakota made by Lieut. G. K. Warren, Topographical Engineers, and published in 1859, and on many maps of subsequent dates, appears the name "Old Fort George," at a point on the west bank of the Missouri, opposite the mouth of a stream put down as Wigo-Paha-Wakpa or East Medicine Knoll River. This point is apparently io

miles above Spar Island, io below Farm Island and about 20 below Fort Pierre.

There is but one Return of this Post on file. It is dated July 31, 1855, and signed by Capt. H. W. Wessells, 2nd Infantry and contains the following remarks "Post Return of Fort George, \. T. 20 miles below Fort Pierre." "This post having been purchased by the Quartermasters Department was temporarily occupied on the 15th July by Co. "G" 2nd Infantry for the purpose of removing the buildings when no longer required for the public service and to store such public property as might be discharged from overloaded boats on their way to Fort Pierre."

In a letter from the Commanding Officer at Fort Pierre reporting his arrival dated July 31, 1855, he remarks "In consequence of the low stage of water in the Missouri-the public transports, destined for the Post, have been compelled, to discharge the public Stores at various points along the river-and guards necessarily left, to take charge of the same;-consequently the arrival of the troops at this post, has been protracted, and in detachments. \* \* \* On the 15th instant Major Wessells, with his Company, was temporarily detached to Fort George to receive any public stores the transports might be compelled to discharge, at that point, and if the buildings there should not be required for that purpose to take them down preparatory to their material being transported to this post, for the construction of public store-houses &c., here."

It further appears from remarks of Lieut. Warren, Topographical Engineers, the officer who surveyed the vicinity in order to lay off a reservation, that in August 1855 one Dupuis was camped not far from the mouth of the Cheyenne "with the party formerly at Fort George."

Although it would appear from the foregoing that the Government had purchased certain buildings, etc., at a point on the river known as Fort George, thus causing the removal of the occupants-evidently traders and trappers-and removed the material of which they were constructed to Fort Pierre, nothing can be found of record regarding such purchase, from whom purchased, or the final disposition of the establishment.

June 10, 1897,

Col. J. C. Gilmore,  
Asst. Adjt. Genl U. S. Army,  
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

Referring to your letter of May 26th concerning Old Fort George, on the Missouri river, 20 miles below Fort Pierre, I would respectfully state that I received the letter on the eve of my departure from St. Louis, so could not personally make the enquiries suggested.

I turned your letter & accompanying papers over to :Elr. Pierre Chouteau, who promised to make the enquiries requested & to communicate the result to you.

I saw Mr. Charles P. Chouteau on the subject, who stated that he remembered Old Fort George ; that it was an establishment of three traders named Preman, Harvey & Boise, a sort of opposition establishment to Fort Pierre. It was an insignificant affair, consisting of a few huts & not stockaded nor fortified at all. The business of the establishment was soon absorbed by the Chouteau Co. the men themselves (Preman, Harvey & Boise) entering into the employ of the Chouteau Co. Mr. Chouteau does not remember the dates. He has no recollection of the place itself ever having come into the possession of the Chouteau Co. (only the business) & he has no recollection of its acquirement or occupation by the Government.

Mr. Pierre Chouteau will undoubtedly soon put you in possession of more information, from Capt. LaBarge & other sources. Should you not hear from Mr. Chouteau shortly please let me know & I will remind him of the matter.

Very respectfully,

-D. D. Johnson,  
1st Lt. U. S. Army, Retired.